

Communique - Meeting No. 37/ 2025

26 and 27 August 2025

The Aboriginal Advisory Council of Western Australia (the Council) held Meeting No. 37 on Tuesday 26 and Wednesday 27 August 2025 at Dumas House. Members in attendance were Rani Randall, Jenny Bedford, Maureen (MK) Kelly, Damien Parriman, Gail Beck, Michael Ogilvie and Irene Stainton.

The meeting included a range of engagements aligned to Council's Strategic Pillars: Systemic Reform, Truth-Telling and Youth and Family Justice. Key items Council discussed and considered included:

Ministerial Engagement

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

Minister Punch reaffirmed his commitment to engaging with Aboriginal communities and highlighted the importance of land-based economic opportunities, place-based initiatives and fostering relationships to deliver meaningful outcomes for Aboriginal people and communities. The Minister and Council discussed current initiatives aimed at improving municipal and housing services in regional and remote communities. Council raised concerns regarding the lack of funding and investment in Aboriginal Affairs.

Engagements*

AACWA Governance Program (Internal Engagement)

Council was briefed on progress towards finalising the new Charter of Governance, the Code of Conduct and the Expression of Interest process.

Closing the Gap Implementation Plan (Yamagigu Consulting, the Council of Aboriginal Services Western Australia and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet)

Discussions included addressing racism, strengthening Aboriginal workforce representation and the importance of understanding Priority Reform 3 – Transforming Government Organisations to enable systemic reform. Key themes included the need for accountability mechanisms, support for Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, evidence-based frameworks and place-based approaches.

Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH)

DPLH briefed Council on analytical work being undertaken to forecast WA's Aboriginal population. Cultural considerations relevant to the project, challenges and timeframes were also discussed.

National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA)

NIAA briefed Council on the Remote Jobs and Economic Development Program, Remote Australia Employment Service and the Indigenous Rangers Program, highlighting community benefits. NIAA explained its Food Security Initiatives and encouraged Council to advocate for WA's participation in the National Strategy for Food Security in Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities.

Reconciliation WA (RecWA)

RecWA provided an overview of its *Reconciliation WA Strategy 2025 - 2030* and discussed truth-telling, anti-racism and cross-agency collaboration as its key priorities. Council expressed interest in collaborating on future initiatives and reflected on opportunities to elevate Aboriginal Advisory Groups.

Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF)

DTF provided an overview of the 2025-26 State Budget, which considered investment in priority areas including Aboriginal wellbeing. Treasury provided updates on its Aboriginal Expenditure Review.

Aboriginal Justice Advisory Council (AJAC)

AJAC explained its function, challenges and recent recommendations provided to the Department of Justice. Discussions were held regarding incarceration rates, sector-wide Aboriginal representation and the need for cross-agency collaboration and advocacy to support youth programs and systemic reform.



* Confidential agenda items were not included in this Communique.

Ms Rani Randall,

Co-Chairperson, Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA